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ON PAGE A1

NEW YORK TIMES
23 October 1985

U.S. Says Soviet Violates Treaty With a Missile

Moscow Denies SS-25 Is a Breach of '79 Pact

By CHARLES MOHR

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Oct. 22 — The United States said today that the Soviet Union had begun deploying a new intercontinental nuclear missile in violation of the 1979 treaty limiting offensive strategic weapons.

Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger said in a speech that he could "confirm officially" that deployment of the single-warhead missile, known as the SS-25, had begun.

The State Department spokesman, Bernard Kalb, said the Soviet Government had informed the United States that SS-25's had been deployed.

[In Sofia, Bulgaria, according to CBS News, a Soviet spokesman, Vladimir B. Lomeiko, denied that the deployment was a treaty violation. Mr. Lomeiko, in Sofia for a Warsaw Pact meeting, affirmed the Soviet position that the SS-25 was a modification of an existing weapon, the SS-13, and that the modification was permitted by treaty.]

Reagan Looks to Gorbachev Talks

Meanwhile, President Reagan, on the eve of his visit to the United Nations, said that he was "determined to build a more constructive relationship" with the Soviet Union and to seek reductions in the nuclear arsenals of the two countries.

Mr. Weinberger's remarks on the SS-25 missile seemed intended to portray the Soviet Union as a violator of international agreements when there is debate about a new United States interpretation of the 1972 treaty limiting antiballistic missile defenses.

The United States has been anticipating the deployment of the SS-25 and has been saying that the development showed that the Soviet Union paid little heed to arms control treaties.

A Pentagon assessment of Soviet military power published in April, described two suspected bases of the SS-25 as "nearing operational capability." A defense intelligence official said then, "If the Russians wanted to, they could deploy it tomorrow."

The 1979 arms treaty, which has not been ratified but most of whose terms the two governments have pledged to observe, permits only one new ICBM. The Russians, in calling the SS-25 a modification permitted by treaty, have said that their new ICBM is the SS-24, a 10-warhead missile.

Mr. Weinberger did not say how many SS-25's had been deployed. The United States usually does not declare a missile operational until 10 missiles are in the field. Mr. Weinberger called the SS-25 a "very versatile and very dangerous weapon" of high accuracy that was "road-mobile and can be housed in launcher garages equipped with sliding roofs."

The Defense Secretary spoke at a forum of the Ethics and Public Policy Center, a private group, on the ethical issues of arms control.

He described a large phased array radar under construction in central Siberia at Abalakovo, north of Krasnoyarsk, as "a blatant violation" of the 1972 ABM treaty.

The treaty says that radars for early warning of missile attack must be on the periphery of the national territory and oriented outward. The Russians contend that the Abalakovo radar is intended to track objects in space. The Americans say it could ultimately be given an antimissile capability.

Meanwhile, discussion of a new interpretation of the meaning of the 1972 ABM treaty continued in a hearing of the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on arms control, international security and science.

The issue is whether the treaty permits the development and full-scale testing of advanced technology such as lasers, or whether development and testing of all space-based antimissile weapons are banned.

Abraham D. Sofaer, who is legal adviser to the State Department, testified that a study of the secret negotiating record showed the Soviet Union "refused to go along" with United States efforts to limit work on futuristic technologies.

John B. Rhineland, legal adviser to the 1972 treaty team, said of the present Government position, "This rationale is absurd as a matter of policy, intent and interpretation."

Representative Jim Leach, Republican of Iowa, described the Government's position as a "blueprint for confusion."

Gerard C. Smith, the chief negotiator of the 1972 treaty, said: "The arms control relation between the superpowers is in a fragile state. The United States has refused to ratify the last three arms control treaties. On top of this, the United States has now unilaterally revised the last arms control treaty it has ratified, and done so in a radical fashion which goes to the heart of the bargain."